



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

**Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board
La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council
Meeting Minutes**

Call to Order/Welcome/Introduction of Guests

The regular meeting of the La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council was held on June 27, 2013, at 9:30 a.m. at the Kingman Unified School District, 3033 MacDonald Avenue, Kingman, Arizona 86401.

Vice Chair Mongeau called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Council members, staff and guests introduced themselves.

Members Present

Alisa Burroughs, Jose Garcia, Betsy Lewis, Nancy Mongeau, Vijette Saari, Debra Weger and Howard Weiske.

Members Absent

Riley Frei, Terri Holloway, Lenore Knudtson and Catie Sondrol.

Call to the Public

Tonya Ford, Coordinator of the Infant and Toddler Mental Health Team, reported that 154 people attended a seminar by Dr. Ira Chasnoff, M.D. that focused on drugs, alcohol, pregnancy and infant mental health on July 25, 2013. Ms. Ford noted that she is retiring next week, and the new director is planning to take the team in a different direction that concentrates on implementation. Ms. Ford showed us a new guide listing resources in Mohave and La Paz counties. She encouraged everyone to contact her office if anything is missing. The council and Regional Director Merritt Beckett thanked Ms. Ford for her work to promote healthy development of children birth to five years of age in our region. Director Beckett noted that Ms. Ford will be a presenter at the First Things First Early Childhood Summit in August and that the theme of the summit is system building.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Member Weger made a motion to approve the May 23, 2013 meeting minutes. Member Weiske seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Community Outreach Update

Erin Taylor, Community Outreach Coordinator noted the article on the front page of today's Kingman Daily Miner that highlights the efforts of Ms. Ford's team and Dr. Chasnoff's presentation. Coordinator Taylor reviewed the recent events she has presented at, including a presentation about Ms. Ford's court team to the Colorado River Indian Tribes, a very successful Kids' Fair at Kingman Regional Medical Center – with 700-800 kids in attendance, and a Building Bright Futures group connection – which is an educational play date. Coordinator Taylor reviewed the 2012 Annual Report, a snapshot of First Things First information that will be distributed to parents and stakeholders, including politicians, school superintendents and church officials. Director Beckett noted that she will use the report during meetings with local providers. Coordinator Taylor advised she will be reaching out to the local faith community during the summer months, and several council members offered to assist in that plan.

Update on Intervening Early Opportunity Assessment

Karen Peifer, PhD, Senior Director of Children's Health, provided an update on the early intervention opportunity assessment. With funding from a Health Resources and Services Administration grant, we have partnered with St. Luke's Health Initiative – specifically Dr. Charles Bruner – who looked at Arizona's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and made recommendations accordingly. Dr. Bruner interviewed 22 people around the state, including 2 in the La Paz/Mohave region, and found that we need to start early for lifelong success. Many of Arizona's children are in foster care or live in poverty, and childhood success is clearly tied to maternal education. We need community engagement through community outreach in order to help everyone understand the importance of the early years. Dr. Bruner's final draft report is due in July, and Dr. Peifer requested that comments or suggestions be sent to her.

Review and Discuss Quality First Child Care Scholarships

Director Beckett reviewed the status of the Quality First Child Care Scholarships Strategy and provided an update on SFY 2013 implementation, including an analysis that indicated a large amount of unexpended funds would be left at the end of the fiscal year. She noted that the strategy is a statewide strategy administered by the Valley of the Sun United Way and that many other regions are similarly impacted by the situation. As a result, a statewide plan was approved to provide additional, temporary scholarships for the remainder of SFY 2013 and in to SFY 2014. Council members engaged in discussion about how unexpended funds are typically handled and expressed concern that a decision that is normally made at the regional level was made at the state level in this case. Other concerns were the lack of infant and toddler care in the region and the lack of child care for disabled children. The consensus was to work toward increasing availability of child care for infants, toddlers and disabled children, and to ensure that children already in child care through the temporary scholarships are not removed due to a lack of money to fund them.

Director's Report and Possible Discussion

Director Beckett reviewed the SFY 2013 Financial Report, noting that the Ft. Mojave Indian Tribe contract will end June 30 and the tribe has indicated they are not going to renew the contract. This program has struggled with uptake and maintaining families, and may need to be housed in a different department. She has been meeting with an advisory committee and will advise the council of any future discussions. Director Beckett reviewed the Child Care Health Consultation strategy, noting that we have not had a contract in place this year and are preparing to enter in to a new contract with the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension for a SFY 2014. The TEACH (only) contract also is ending June 30 and will not be renewed for SFY 2014 because the statewide contract will be sufficient to meet the need in the region. The Arizona Department of Education is working with the Salome and Quartzsite school districts to start-up their preschool programs and due to the late start for this program near the end of the fiscal year, the unused funding could potentially be added to their FY2014 contract. That is a discussion that would be brought back to the regional council for a decision if necessary. Director Beckett discussed the Pre-K scholarship strategy, noting that four of the contracts are low in fund usage because they bill quarterly. Grantees have until August 15, 2013 to submit final billings. Current projections indicate the council's unplanned carry forward could be about \$1M; but it's important to remember that the region's SFY 2014 funding plan has a deficit (for planning purposes only) in SFY 2015, assuming current funding levels for existing programs are sustained. Director Beckett discussed the format of the school readiness indicator data summary to illustrate for the council what these summaries will contain. The region will be receiving a data summary for each of the ten School Readiness Indicators and will only need to select benchmarks for the three indicators we have prioritized. Dr. Amy Kemp will be here to help facilitate the conversation when the council develops benchmarks for the three prioritized indicators. Director Beckett provided an update on system-building, noting that on June 14 the FTF-funded home visitation providers convened and discussed referrals, determining which program is the best fit, the possibility of a universal intake form, and ideas to make services seamless. The group decided to meet quarterly and include non-FTF programs in future meetings. She also advised the council members that, in preparation for the next funding cycle, she plans to meet 1:1 with key decision makers (e.g. Head Start, AZEIP, CPS, school superintendents) to explain First Things First and regional priorities before asking for their assistance with key informant interviews for the 2014 Regional Needs and Assets Report. She requested that members advise whom they suggest she reach out to. Members agreed they would like to accompany, or possibly introduce her. Director Beckett advised that she met with the new AZEIP provider, A to Z Therapies, and invited them to attend upcoming council meetings and coordination meetings. The next coordination meeting is Tuesday, August 6 in Kingman, and Maggie Wilcox (the former oral health coordinator) and Ann Kaskel, Child Care Health Consultant will discuss oral health, current resources and ideas for integration. The First Things First Early Childhood Summit is August 26-27, 2013 in Phoenix.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 25, 2013 at the El Capitan K-12 School located at 255 North Cottonwood Street, Colorado City, Arizona 86021.

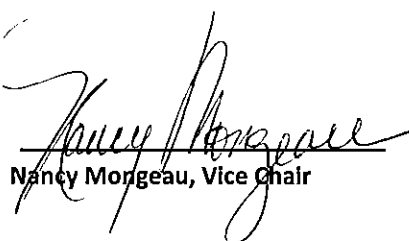
Adjourn

Member Garcia made a motion to adjourn at 11:47 a.m. Member Weiske seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:


Sandy Smith, Administrative Assistant


Nancy Mongeau, Vice Chair